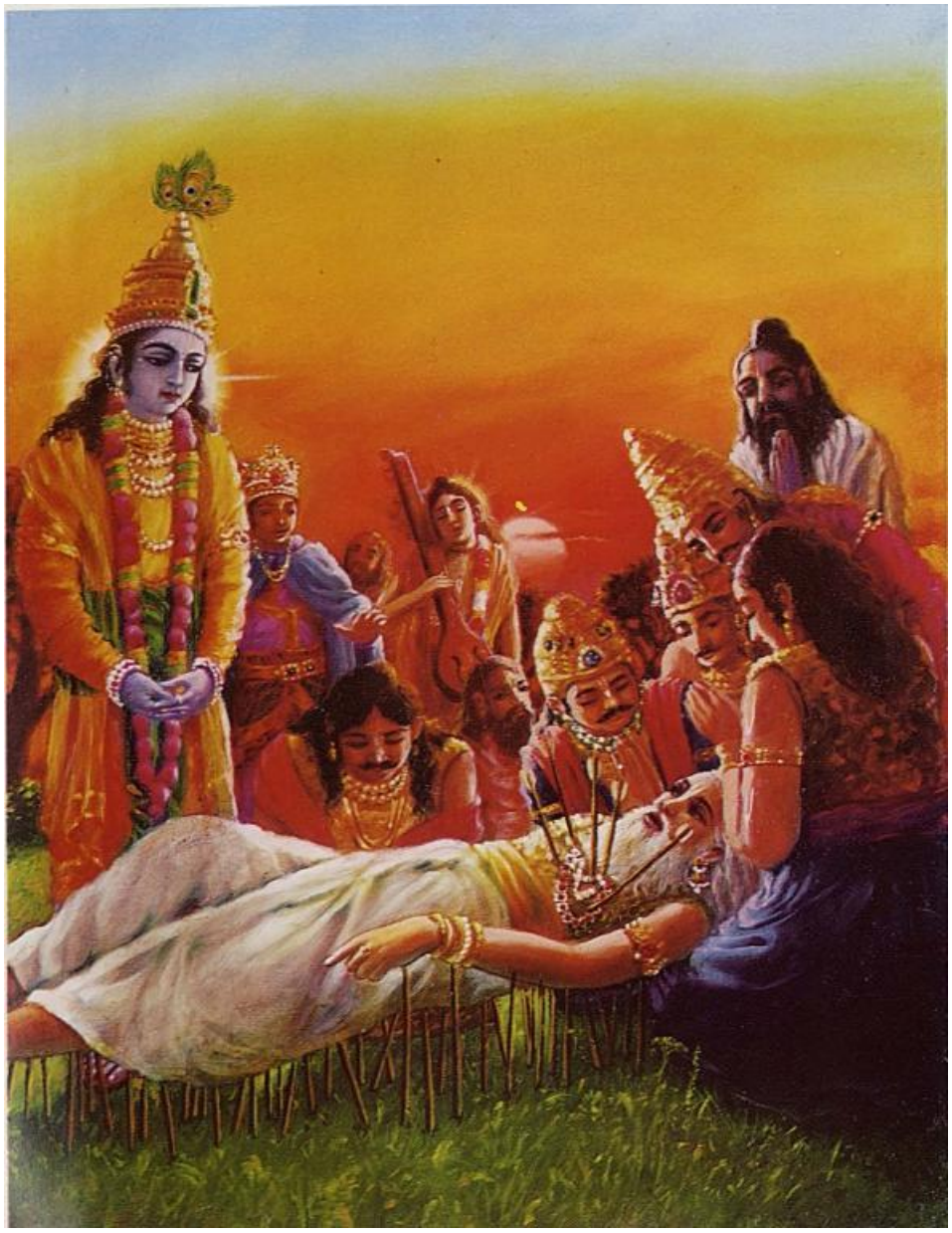

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam
by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Canto One, Chapter Nine, Text 39

vijaya-ratha-kuṭumba ātta-totre
dhṛta-haya-raśmini tac-chriyekṣaṇīye
bhagavati ratir astu me mumūrṣor
yam iha nirīkṣya hatā gatāḥ sva-rūpam

vijaya—Arjuna; ratha—chariot; kuṭumbe—the object of protection at all risk; ātta-totre—with a whip in the right hand; dhṛta-haya—controlling the horses; raśmini—ropes; tat-śriyā—beautifully standing; īkṣaṇīye—to look at; bhagavati—unto the Personality of Godhead; ratiḥ astu—let my attraction be; me—my; mumūrṣoḥ—one who is about to die; yam—upon whom; iha—in this world; nirīkṣya—by looking; hatāḥ—those who died; gatāḥ—attained; sva-rūpam—original form.

TRANSLATION

At the moment of death, let my ultimate attraction be to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead. I concentrate my mind upon the chariot driver of Arjuna who stood with a whip in His right hand and a bridle rope in His left, who was very careful to give protection to Arjuna's chariot by all means. Those who saw Him on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra attained their original forms after death.

PURPORT

A pure devotee of the Lord constantly sees the presence of the Lord within himself because of being transcendentally related by loving service. Such a pure devotee cannot forget the Lord for a moment. This is called trance. The mystic (yogī) tries to concentrate upon the Supersoul by controlling the senses from all other engagements, and thus he ultimately attains samādhi. A devotee more easily attains samādhi, or trance, by constantly remembering the Lord's personal feature along with His holy name, fame, pastimes, etc. Therefore, the concentration of the mystic yogī and that of the devotee are not on the same level. The concentration of the mystic is mechanical, whereas that of the pure devotee is natural in pure love and spontaneous affection. Bhīṣmadeva was a pure devotee, and as a military marshal he constantly remembered the battlefield feature of the Lord as Pārtha-sārathi, the chariot driver of Arjuna. Therefore, the Lord's pastime as Pārtha-sārathi is also eternal. The pastimes of the Lord, beginning from His birth at the prison house of Kaṁsa up to the mausala-līlā at the end, all move one after another in all the universes, just as the clock hand moves from one point to another. And in such pastimes His associates like the Pāṇḍavas and Bhīṣma are constant eternal companions. So Bhīṣmadeva never forgot the beautiful feature of the Lord as Pārtha-sārathi, which even Arjuna could not see. Arjuna was behind the beautiful Pārtha-sārathi while Bhīṣmadeva was just in front of the Lord. As far as the military feature of the Lord is concerned, Bhīṣmadeva observed this with more relish than Arjuna.

All the soldiers and persons on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra attained their original spiritual form like the Lord after their death because by the causeless mercy of the Lord they were able to see Him face to face on that occasion. The conditioned souls rotating in the evolutionary cycle from the aquatics up to the form of Brahmā are all in the form of māyā, or the form obtained by one's own actions and awarded by material nature. The material forms of the conditioned souls are all foreign dresses, and when the conditioned soul becomes liberated from the clutches of material energy, he attains his original form. The impersonalist wants to attain the impersonal Brahman effulgence of the Lord, but that is not at all congenial to the living sparks, parts and parcels of the Lord. Therefore,

the impersonalists again fall down and get material forms, which are all false to the spirit soul. A spiritual form like the Lord's, either two-handed or four-handed, is attained by the devotees of the Lord either in the Vaikuṇṭhas or in the Goloka planet, according to the original nature of the soul. This form, which is cent percent spiritual, is the svarūpa of the living being, and all the living beings who participated on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, on both sides, attained their svarūpa, as confirmed by Bhīṣmadeva. So Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was not merciful only to the Pāṇḍavas; He was also merciful to the other parties because all of them attained the same result. Bhīṣmadeva wanted the same facility also, and that was his prayer to the Lord, although his position as an associate of the Lord is assured in all circumstances. The conclusion is that whoever dies looking on the Personality of Godhead within or without attains his svarūpa, which is the highest perfection of life.